XLVIII. *An Account of a Caſe, in which Green Hemlock was applied: In a Letter to the Rt. Hon.* Hugh *Lord* Willoughby *of* Parham, *V. P. of the R. S. by Mr.* Joſiah Colebrook, *F. R. S.*

My Lord,

Read Dec. 15, 1763. I Take the liberty, from the friendſhip you are pleaſed to honour me with, to addreſs the encloſed caſe to your Lordſhip, and hope you will think it worth communicating to the Royal Society. It is a bare relation of matters of fact, moſt of them within my own knowledge, the others atteſted by perſons whoſe veracity I can depend on. As the hemlock taken in this manner gave great relief to this poor woman, labouring under the moſt dreadful diſeaſe human nature is liable to; it may be attended with the ſame ſucceſs to other perſons, in the ſame circumſtances.

I am well aſſured your Lordſhip rejoices at every opportunity of doing good to mankind, by communicating any beneficial diſcoveries of your own, or your friends; among whom you will excuſe my vanity in placing myſelf, who am,

with the greateſt reſpect,

your Lordſhip's

moſt humble Servant,

J. Colebrook.

ANN James of the pariſh of Boughton Monchelſey in Kent, aged 55 years, a married woman, had for ſome years complained of a pain, and hard lump in each breaſt. In September 1762 ſhe aſked my advice about them: upon examining them I found a very hard ſchirrus in each breaſt: that in the left breaſt, had the mamillary glands indurated and knobbed like ramifications toward the axilla, a little adheſion to the pectoral muſcle; was as big as a turkey's egg, and ſhe was under daily apprehenſions, that it would break. That in the right breaſt was not near ſo large, or had ramifications nor adhered like the other. She complained of moſt excruciating ſtabbing pains in both breaſts, which prevented her having any reſt in the night, and made her ſo very miſerable all day, whether ſhe lay down, ſtood, ſat, or walked, that ſhe was unable, not only to go out to work, but even to do any thing for her family at home, not even to make her own bed; and ſhe had totally loſt her appetite: her uſual employ was ſpinning, waſhing, brewing, and what we in London call the buſineſs of a chairwoman. The breaſts were but little diſcoloured, but the pains ſhe deſcribed, and the ramifications attending the ſchirrus, in the left breaſt, induced me to pronounce it a cancer.

I adviſed her to take the green hemlock, viz. cicuta major vulgaris caule maculoſo; mince it with parſly (to diſguiſe the taſte) and eat it with bread and butter twice or three times in a day, the third part of a leaf, or one of the three diviſions, which are in each leaf, at a time; that her conſtant drink

ſhould be lime water and milk; that ſhe ſhould take as many millepedes every day, as her ſtomach would bear, or ſhe could get, that her body ſhould be kept open by Rhubarb, or Magneſia, as occaſion required; that ſhe ſhould have an iſſue in her arm, and loſe ſix or eight ounces of blood once in ſix or eight weeks, if her pains continued.

A good lady in the neighbourhood, whoſe humanity is only to be equalled by her good ſenſe, generouſly promiſed to ſee, that ſhe purſued this regimen, and from time to time give me an account of the ſucceſs.

I deſired a leaf might be weighed, that I might aſcertain the quantity of each doſe, and found ſhe took fifteen grains of the green plant three times in a day: finding it agree with her ſtomach, and that it eaſed her pains, though it cauſed a tingling to her fingers ends: ſhe encreaſed the quantity. In the beginning of November ſhe had a very large menſtrual diſcharge, which had not happened to her for many years before; the ſchirrus was much leſſened, and her pains were conſiderably abated.

About the end of November ſhe found her breaſt more ſwelled, and the pain more acute than it had been for ſix weeks before, had a reſtleſſneſs, giddineſs in her head, and weight over her eyes; the diſcharge of the iſſue ſtopped, and a violent humour came all round the orifice. As I had deſired a little blood might be taken away, if occaſion required it, ſhe was bled about the laſt day of November, on which ſhe fainted away, and afterwards had fainting fits two or three times in a day, great ſickneſs at her ſtomach, and ſometimes bled at the noſe. On theſe

ſymptoms

ſymptoms coming on, notwithſtanding ſhe had taken ſomewhat purgative twice in a week, from from her firſt beginning to take the hemlock, it was thought proper to ſuſpend the taking the hemlock for ſome days.

I then ordered her an infuſion of the cortex Peruvianus an ounce, in powder, to a quart of ſpring water, to let it ſtand three or four days, ſhaking it every day; and then that ſhe ſhould take three ſpoonfuls, twice in a day; that ſhe ſhould repeat the hemlock in the ſame quantity ſhe took at the firſt; that ſhe ſhould not again exceed that quantity on any account; and that ſhe ſhould continue the lime-water and the millepedes.

About the latter end of December ſhe had a regular appearance of her menſes, but very moderate; her pains were very much abated, and the ſchirrus much leſs, though ſhe often complained of a ſwimming in her head, and a reſtleſſneſs in the night. From this time, viz. the end of December, ſhe continued mending in all reſpects ſo much, that I heard nothing of her 'till March 1763; when Mrs. Savage (the lady under whoſe inſpection ſhe took the hemlock) came to London, and told me, that Ann James was ſurprizingly recovered; that her cancer was much leſſened, that ſhe could uſe her arms, work for herſelf and family, and that her pains were ſo much abated, that ſhe was quite happy.

In September laſt I was at Boughton, ſaw her, and examined her breaſts: the ſchirrus in her left breaſt was not half ſo big as when I ſaw it before; the ramifications were all gone, and it did not at

all adhere to the pectoral muſcle; her appetite was good, and ſhe was able to do her buſineſs as uſual, and had that day I ſaw her been brewing: ſhe ſaid ſhe ſometimes felt ſome of thoſe ſtabbing pains ſhe before complained of, but they were not frequent nor very ſevere.

The beginning of this November I had a farther account of her from Sir Thomas Ryder, who lives in that neighbourhood, and whom I deſired to be ſo kind as to inform me of her preſent ſtate of health: he with his uſual benevolence (than whom no man hath more) ſent for the woman, and had the following account from herſelf;

That the lump in her breaſt, which ſhe expected would break, is not half ſo big as it was, and continued decreaſing; that ſhe hath great ſpirits; and, from being one of the moſt miſerable of the human ſpecies, ſhe now enjoys eaſe and happineſs, and can, without any great pain, do all her uſual buſineſs, as waſhing, brewing, baking, and needle-work, except ſpinning, that motion ſtill giving her great pain: ſhe continues to take half a drachm of dry hemlock twice in a day, but takes the green, when ſhe can get it, in larger quantities. Sir Thomas adds, that ſhe looks very well for a woman of her age.

From the happy ſucceſs of the hemlock in this inſtance, it were to be wiſhed it might be tried in ſome other ſimilar caſe, and that the weight of the plant taken in one day (whether green or dry) might be particularly aſcertained, which was too often in this caſe taken by gueſs; and as the extract

tract recommended by Dr. Stork in his ingenious treatiſe hath not, upon trial in England, been attended with the ſame ſucceſs it had at Vienna, I ſhould prefer the herb itſelf to any preparation of it.

XLIX. *An Account of a remarkable Meteor: In a Letter to the Reverend* Thomas Birch, *D. D. Secret. of R. S. from Mr.* Samuel Dunn.

Reverend Sir, Chelſea, Dec. 9th, 1763.

Read Dec. 15, 1763. IN the Months of September and October laſt, on many different days, but always in the afternoon, when the Sun was nearly of the ſame height above the horizon, I was amuſed with the appearance of a kind of meteor, which I do not know that it hath been before taken notice of by others. As it appeared under nearly the ſame circumſtances at other times, and therefore may contribute towards the better underſtanding the theory of a parhelion, I ſhall give the deſcription of this meteor, as it appeared the 6th of October laſt, at five o'clock afternoon. A kind of mock Sun appeared of equal altitude with the real Sun about $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ ſoutherly therefrom. A little